



Reflections

Visitor Guide
Winter/Spring 2011-2012



Keeping the Park Open is ‘Snow’ Easy Task

What were you doing at 4:00 a.m. this morning? If you were a member of the Crater Lake roads crew, you might have been reporting for duty!

Trying to keep Highway 62 and the road to Rim Village open year-round is no easy task. Each day, the park’s heavy equipment operators work from 4:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., in two different shifts, clearing snow and sanding roads. During heavy storms, snow removal becomes a 24-hour operation, with crews working 12 hours at a time.

Snow plows were first used at Crater Lake in 1930. Prior to that, crews used shovels and dynamite to clear the roads each spring. Today, the park employs 6 operators and 2 mechanics who use both push plows and rotary plows. The rotary plows are equipped with a fan that can shoot snow 75 to 80 feet (24 meters) into the air. To control where the snow lands, the operator can vary the angle and volume of output.

The amount of snow moved each winter by the park’s roads crew is astounding. With it, you could create a ski trail 3 feet (91 cm) wide, 6 inches (15 cm) deep, and long enough to circle the Earth at the equator!

Steve Thomas is one of the park’s most experienced equipment operators, having started here in 1979. Even after decades on the job, he still finds the work challenging. *(continued on back page)*

A Lake Full of Snowflakes

Perched at the crest of the Cascade Mountain Range, Crater Lake National Park is one of the snowiest inhabited places in America. Storms from the Pacific Ocean dump an average of 44 feet (13 meters) of snow at Park Headquarters each year. Last winter, the park received 56 feet (17 meters) of snow! That’s equivalent to 1.8 inches (4.7 cm) of snow falling every day for 365 days.

Now you might be wondering: is this tremendous amount of snow a burden or a blessing? Well, on the one hand, it can certainly make life difficult! Many animals, including deer and elk, must leave the park each winter in order to survive. Park employees must toil constantly to keep roads plowed and facilities functioning. And for park visitors, storms often lead to disappointment—Crater Lake is completely obscured by clouds roughly 50% of the time in the winter and early spring.

But consider the bounty that blizzards bring. The thick blanket of snow provides protection and warmth for “subnivean” mammals such as shrews, voles, and pikas. Snow provides us with opportunities to ski, sled, snowshoe, and to marvel at winter’s beauty. Snow also benefits people beyond the park, since most of the snowpack eventually leaves the park to feed the Rogue, Umpqua, and Klamath Rivers. Snowy winters are good news for downstream farmers, ranchers, cities, and wildlife.

Above all, it’s thanks to snow that there’s a lake in Crater Lake! This mountaintop caldera receives no water from rivers or streams. Its water comes directly from the sky. Crater Lake is, quite literally, filled with snowflakes. And because it’s fed by pure snowmelt (and there are no rivers or streams contributing silt, sediment, and pollution), the lake holds a world record. It’s considered to be the cleanest and clearest large body of water on Earth. In fact, the water in Crater Lake is cleaner than what pours out of your faucet at home!

So, despite the hardships they impose, the long and snowy winters of Crater Lake National Park are ultimately a cause for gratitude, delight, and celebration. Let it snow!



A park ranger is dwarfed by a snowbank at Rim Village on May 2, 2011.



Snowshoe with a Park Ranger!

Ranger-guided snowshoe walks are a fun way to experience the winter wonderland of Crater Lake National Park. Walks are offered every Saturday and Sunday at 1:00 p.m. from late November through the end of April (and sometimes beyond). Walks are also offered on weekdays from December 26 through January 1. Snowshoes are provided free of charge and no previous snowshoeing experience is necessary.

The walks last 2 hours and cover about 1 mile (1.6 km) of moderately strenuous terrain. The route is up to the ranger, but most walks begin at Rim Village and explore the forests and meadows along the rim of the caldera. Along the way, participants discover how plants, animals, and Crater Lake itself are shaped by the forces of winter.

Space on each tour is limited, and advance reservations are recommended. You can sign up at the Steel Visitor Center or by calling 541-594-3100. Participants should be at least 8 years old, be in reasonably good physical condition, and come prepared with warm clothing and water-resistant footwear.

School groups, outdoor clubs, and other organized groups of 10 or more people can often arrange for a separate snowshoe walk. Group walks are available on weekdays as well as weekends.

Park Profile

Crater Lake National Park protects the deepest lake in the United States. Fed by rain and snow (but no rivers or streams), the lake is also considered to be the cleanest and clearest large body of in the world.

The lake rests inside a caldera formed about 7,700 years ago when a 12,000-foot-tall (3,600-meter) volcano collapsed following a major eruption. The eruption may have been the largest in North America in the past 640,000 years. Later eruptions formed Wizard Island, a cinder cone near the southwest shore.

Today, old-growth forests blanket the volcano’s outer slopes, harboring a variety of plants and animals, including several rare species. The park is central to the cultural traditions of local American Indian tribes, and it provides unique opportunities for scientific study and public enjoyment.

- Park established: 1902
- Size: 183,000 acres (74,060 hectares)
- Visitors per year: About 500,000
- Lake depth: 1,943 feet (592 meters)
- Lake width: 4.5 to 6 miles (7 to 10 km)
- Lake volume: 5 trillion gallons (19 tr. liters)
- Last time the lake froze over: 1949

Park Climate

Data is from Park Headquarters, 1931-2005.

FAHRENHEIT	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Average Daily High (°F)	34	35	37	43	50	58	69	69	63	52	40	35
Average Daily Low (°F)	18	18	19	23	29	34	41	41	37	31	24	20
Average Snowfall (inches)	105	84	84	45	20	4	0.2	0.1	3	22	64	94
Avg. Snow Depth (inches)	80	104	117	112	77	24	1	0	0	2	17	49

CELSIUS	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Average Daily High (°C)	1	2	3	6	10	14	21	21	17	11	4	2
Average Daily Low (°C)	-8	-8	-7	-5	-2	1	5	5	3	-1	-4	-7
Average Snowfall (cm)	267	213	213	114	51	10	0.5	0.3	8	56	163	239
Avg. Snow Depth (cm)	203	264	297	284	196	61	3	0	0	5	43	124



National Park Service
U.S. Dept. of the Interior

Crater Lake Visitor Guide
Winter/Spring 2011-2012

This is the official trip-planner and newspaper of Crater Lake National Park. It is published twice a year and funded by the Crater Lake Natural History Association through sales made in the visitor center bookstores.

Park Mailing Address:
Crater Lake National Park
P.O. Box 7
Crater Lake, OR 97604

Phone: 541-594-3000
Website: www.nps.gov/crla
E-mail: crla_information_requests@nps.gov

Accessibility
The Steel Visitor Center is accessible to people with mobility impairments, as is the Rim Village Café & Gift Shop. Weather permitting, partial views of Crater Lake can be obtained from the top floor of the gift shop, which is accessible via elevator.

Drinking Water
There is a drinking fountain inside the Steel Visitor Center. Bottled water can be purchased at the Rim Village Café.

Emergencies
Dial 911 to report any emergency, 24 hours a day. An emergency phone is located outside the “snow tunnel” entrance to the administration building at Park Headquarters. First aid is available from either the Steel Visitor Center or nearby Ranger Station.

Park Features
Rocks, plants, animals, and artifacts should be left undisturbed for others to enjoy. Collecting, destroying, defacing, or disturbing natural, cultural, or historical features is prohibited.

Pets
Pets on a leash—or otherwise physically restrained—are welcome in the park, but only in developed areas. They must stay within 50 feet (15 meters) of plowed roads and parking lots. Pets are not allowed on ski trails, in buildings, or in the backcountry. Solid pet excrement must be picked up immediately by the owner or person in control of the pet and disposed of in a trash or solid-waste receptacle.

Phones
Cell phone reception in the park is unreliable. You may have luck at Rim Village. There is a 24-hour emergency landline outside the “snow tunnel” entrance to the administration building at Park Headquarters.

Entrance Fee
The park does not collect an entrance fee in the winter months. Donations to support the park may be made at the Steel Visitor Center. A fee of \$10 per car is collected from May through mid-October.

Gasoline
Gasoline is not available in the park in the winter. Gas is available in the nearby communities of Chiloquin, Prospect, and Diamond Lake.

Lodging & Camping
There are no lodging or camping facilities open in the park in the winter, and overnight camping in parking lots is prohibited. Primitive backcountry camping is allowed (*see next page*). Ask at the Steel Visitor Center for a list of accommodations outside the park.

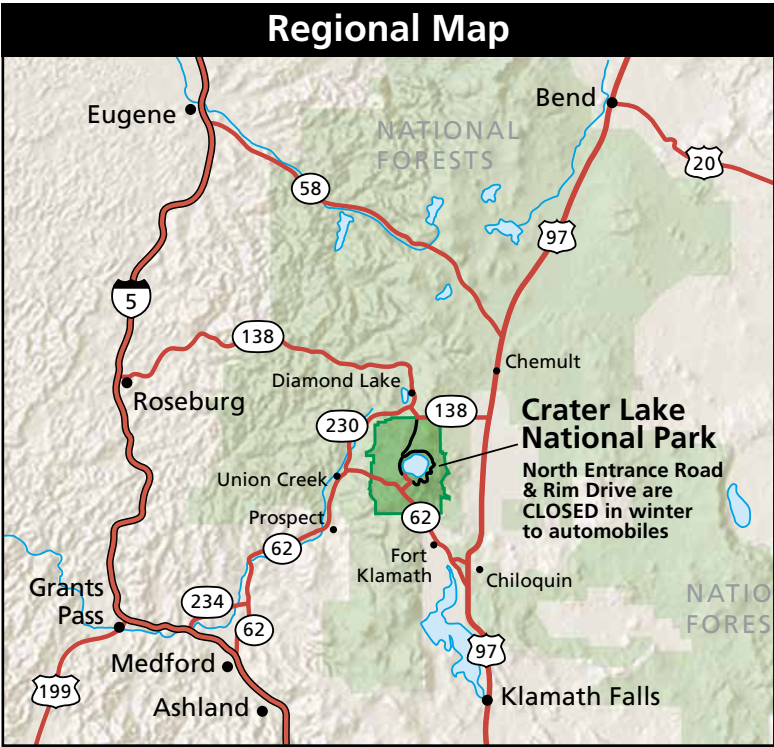
Lost & Found
Report lost & found items to the Steel Visitor Center or call the park's lost & found office at 541-594-3060.

Recycling
Aluminum cans and plastic bottles are accepted at the Rim Village Café.

Restrooms
There is a 24-hour restroom facility at Rim Village. Restrooms can also be found inside the Steel Visitor Center and Rim Village Gift Shop.

Wildlife
Never feed wildlife. This includes birds and squirrels. Feeding animals is dangerous for you, bad for them, and harmful to the ecosystem. Feeding, touching, disturbing, or approaching wildlife is prohibited.

Wizards Island
Two films are shown on request. A 3-minute *Snowplow Video* features breathtaking footage of snow being cleared from the Rim Drive. *Mirror of Heaven* is an 18-minute film that examines the area's human history, from the American Indians who witnessed the crater-forming eruption to the prospectors who stumbled across the lake in the 1850s to the citizens who campaigned for the lake's protection in the 1880s.



Roads & Travel

Crater Lake National Park is open year-round, 24 hours a day. Some roads, trails, and facilities, however, are closed seasonally due to snow.

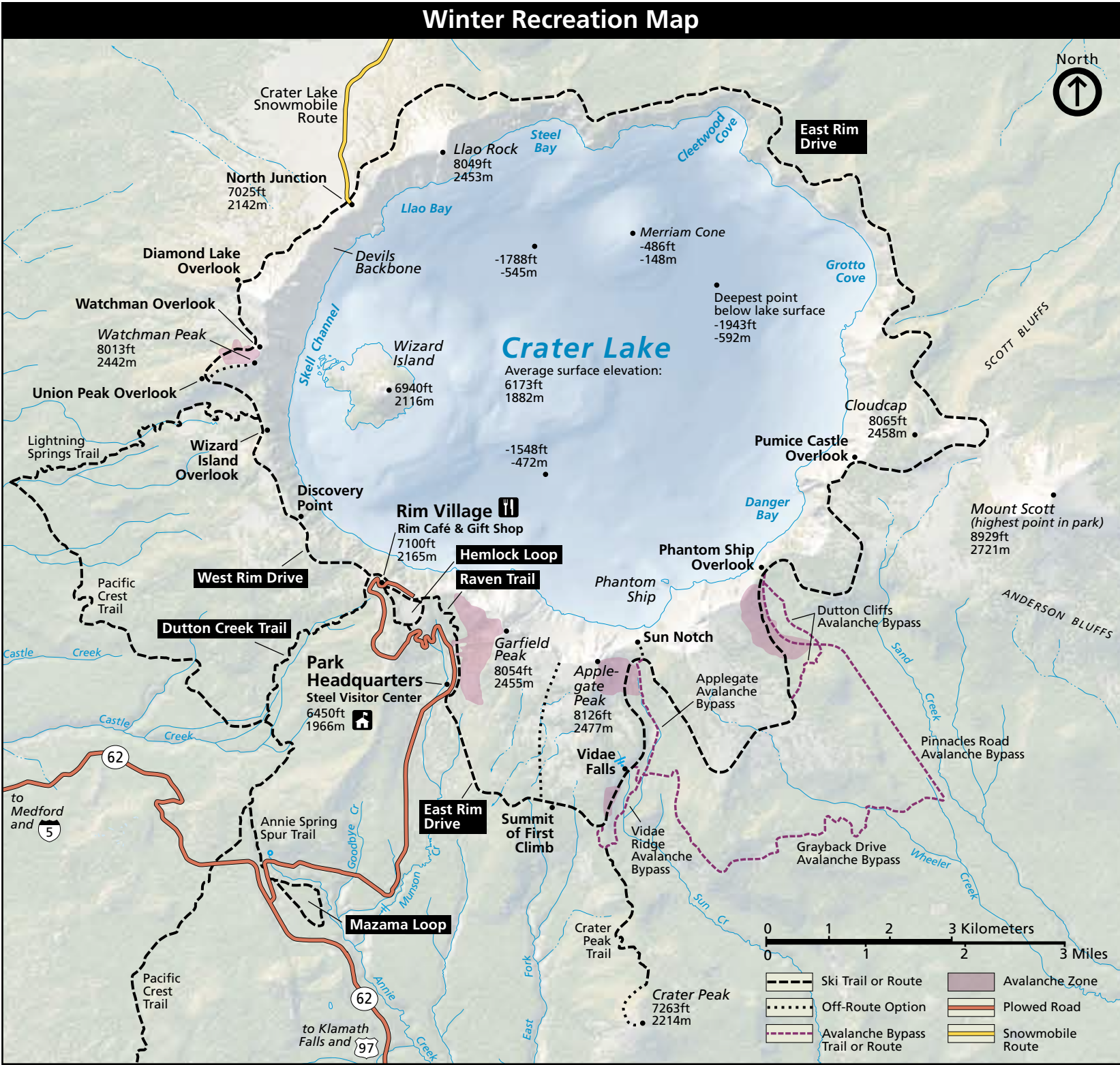
Much of the year, the park's North Entrance Road and Rim Drive are closed to cars. They close with the first significant snowfall, typically in late October or early November. Crews begin removing snow from these roads in April, but opening dates vary. The North Entrance Road and West Rim Drive tend to reopen in early June. The East Rim Drive typically reopens in early July.

Highway 62 is open year-round and plowed daily. The 7-mile road from Highway 62 to Rim Village

is also open year-round, although the last 3 miles—from Park Headquarters to Rim Village—are sometimes closed for hours or days at a time during periods of heavy snow. From Rim Village, Crater Lake can be viewed on clear days throughout the winter.

Even when plowed, park roads are often snow-packed and icy. Come prepared with tires that have good traction. Carrying chains is advisable during snow storms. Before visiting, check the weather forecast. For current road and weather conditions, call 541-594-3100.

For your safety, do not stop or park in the roadway. Parking is allowed only in plowed pullouts and parking areas.



Activities

Lake Viewing

When skies are clear, excellent views of Crater Lake can be obtained from Rim Village. During storms, however, the lake is typically obscured by clouds. The lake is completely “invisible” about 50% of the time in the winter and early spring! To avoid disappointment, check the weather forecast before you leave home. To check visibility at Rim Village, go to www.nps.gov/crla/photosmultimedia and view a webcam pointed toward the lake.

A partial view of Crater Lake can usually be obtained from an observation room on the top floor of the Rim Village Café & Gift Shop. The observation room is accessible via elevator. For a better view of the lake (and when deep snow blocks the view from the observation room), you'll need to climb to the top of a snowbank and take 20 to 30 steps across the snow. A “snow ramp” across from the Rim Village restroom facility provides the easiest access to the top of the snowbank, which is often 10 to 15 feet (3 to 4.6 meters) tall. Be careful—the snow ramp can be icy and slippery, and dangerous snow cornices overhanging the caldera's rim can be difficult to spot. Stay back from the edge!

Rim Village Café & Gift Shop

The Rim Village Café & Gift Shop is open daily except November 24, December 25, and on days when the road to Rim Village is closed due to snow. Winter hours are 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., becoming 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. March 12.

The café offers quick meals including hot sandwiches, soup in bread bowls, chili, hot dogs, nachos, and daily specials. Cookies, brownies, and a variety of snacks are also available. Beverages include coffee, espresso, hot chocolate, soft drinks, and juice. The large gift shop offers a wide selection of t-shirts, gifts, and souvenirs.

An observation room on the top floor provides partial views of Crater Lake (weather permitting). It also contains several exhibits and an information desk staffed by volunteers on the weekends.

The snowmobile route is open as conditions permit, typically from December through March.

Diamond Lake Resort, located 5 miles (8 km) north of the park, offers snowmobile rentals and guided tours to the park. Renting a 1- or 2-person snowmobile costs \$110 for 2 hours, \$160 for 3 hours, \$210 for 4 hours, and \$325 for 8 hours, plus the cost of fuel. Discounts may be available for overnight guests. Guided tours into Crater Lake National Park are available with 48 hours advance notice. Guide service costs \$55 per hour. Most guided trips to the rim of Crater Lake last 3 hours. For more information, call 1-800-733-7593 or visit www.diamondlake.net.

Backcountry Camping

Backcountry camping is allowed in the park year-round. Winter offers well-prepared skiers and snowshoers opportunities to experience occasions of unique beauty and solitude. All campers must obtain a free backcountry permit, in person, from either the Steel Visitor Center or nearby Ranger Station during regular hours of operation.

The most popular overnight trip is out-and-back along the West Rim Drive. The most popular multi-night trip is the 31-mile (50-km) circuit around Crater Lake (*see box, above right*). Snow camping is required; there are no public huts or shelters. Campers must be at least 1 mile (1.6 km) from the nearest plowed road and out of sight and sound of any ski trail or route. For trip-planning advice and a complete list of regulations, stop in at the Steel Visitor Center or call 541-594-3100.

Skiing

The park features a wide variety of marked trails and unmarked routes for cross-country skiers (*see descriptions on right*). The trails are not groomed, so skiers will often need to break trail, sometimes through deep snow. Conditions vary from powdery to icy to wet. Ask at the Steel Visitor Center for trail recommendations.

Skiing is prohibited on roads and parking lots that are open to automobile traffic. Skiing inside the caldera is also strictly prohibited. The park does not rent skis. Ask at the Steel Visitor Center for a list of rental locations outside the park.

Sledding

There are no designated sled hills or snow-play areas in the park, but opportunities for sledding can be found in many places. For your safety, sledding, innertubing, tobogganing, and similar winter sports are prohibited on roads and parking lots that are open to motor vehicle traffic. Please select areas for sledding that have gentle slopes, are free of trees and other obstructions, and that provide a safe, flat runout area. Several such locations can be found in the open meadows near Rim Village.



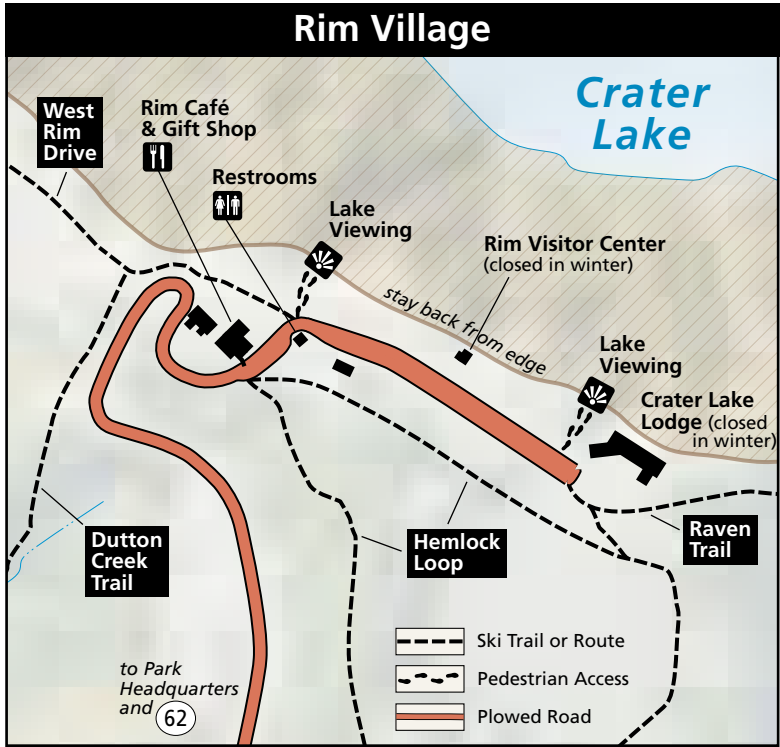
Snowboarding

Snowboarding is allowed in the park, but extreme caution should be used. Snowboarders should be experienced in avalanche safety and winter backcountry travel. Snowboarding inside the caldera is strictly prohibited. Snowboarding is also prohibited on roads and parking lots that are open to automobile traffic.

Snowshoeing

Crater Lake National Park is a snowshoer's paradise. To avoid getting lost, first-time visitors are advised to follow one of the park's many ski trails. As a courtesy to skiers, please refrain from walking on ski tracks. Snowshoeing is allowed everywhere except inside the caldera and on roads and parking lots that are open to automobiles.

The park does not rent snowshoes. Ask at the Steel Visitor Center for a list of rental locations outside the park. Snowshoes are provided free of charge, however, for the park's ranger-guided snowshoe walks. Guided walks are offered every Saturday and Sunday at 1:00 p.m. from late November through at least the end of April (*see page 1*).



Ski Trails

Crater Lake National Park features many miles of marked ski trails and unmarked routes. The most popular are described here. The trails are not groomed and some may be hard to follow; ask at the Steel Visitor Center for more information.

EASIER TRAILS

Mazama Loop

Distance: 1.7 mi. (2.7 km) **loop trail**
Recommended for beginning skiers, this flat trail loops through Mazama Village Campground and provides views into Annie Creek Canyon. It is marked with blue diamonds attached to the trees and, from December through March, orange snow poles in the clearings. **Trailhead:** 4 mi. (6.4 km) south of Park Headquarters, just north of the summer fee booth and Highway 62.

West Rim Drive

This is the park's most popular ski route, providing spectacular views of Crater Lake and Wizard Island. It follows the West Rim Drive, which is unplowed from November to mid-April. The route is not marked, but the path of the underlying road is generally apparent. The route features gently rolling terrain and is suitable for skiers of all abilities. Be aware, however, that conditions are often icy and windy. Occasional forested areas provide some protection from the wind. Trips of varying lengths are possible. Most skiers attempt to reach one of the following destinations before turning back to Rim Village. **Trailhead:** Snow ramp across from the Rim Village restrooms.

Discovery Point
Distance from Rim Village: 1.2 mi. (1.9 km)
Discovery Point is a popular summer pull-out on the West Rim Drive. The overlook offers a fine view of Wizard Island and marks the spot where gold prospector John Hillman first set eyes on Crater Lake in 1853. The overlook is not signed but is fairly obvious as a broad, level viewpoint.

Wizard Island Overlook
Distance from Rim Village: 2.3 mi. (3.7 km)
This small, unmarked viewpoint provides an even better bird's-eye view of Wizard Island. The island is a cinder cone that erupted up through the waters of Crater Lake around 7,300 years ago.

Union Peak Overlook
Distance from Rim Village: 3.1 mi. (5.0 km)
The next road segment is a steady climb, gaining 240 feet (73 meters) in elevation. On a clear day, the ascent is worth the effort: just before the road curves sharply to the right, a small, unmarked viewpoint on the left offers long-distance views of the Cascade Mountain Range. Union Peak, the core of an old volcano, stands 8 miles (13 km) to the south. To the left of Union Peak is Mt. McLoughlin, 35 miles (56 km) away. The views often extend as far as Mt. Shasta, 100 miles (161 km) distant.

Beyond Union Peak Overlook
Distances from Rim Village—
Watchman Overlook: 3.9 mi. (6.3 km)
Diamond Lake Overlook: 4.6 mi. (7.4 km)
North Junction: 6.0 mi. (9.7 km)
Exploring further along the West Rim Drive requires caution. Just beyond Union Peak Overlook, the road traverses a steep cliff face. It may be advisable to leave the road and bypass the road cut higher up on the slope. Do not hesitate to remove your skis or turn back if conditions warrant. The north side of Watchman Peak is known for its icy conditions, steep drop-

offs, and avalanche-prone slopes. If you continue, possible destinations include Watchman Overlook, Diamond Lake Overlook, and North Junction. Another option, popular with snowshoers, is to attain the summit of Watchman Peak via its western ridge. The building atop the peak is a fire lookout, built in 1932 and still staffed by rangers in the summer.

INTERMEDIATE TRAILS

Hemlock Loop

Distance: 1.3 mi. (2.1 km) **loop trail**
This enjoyable loop trail offers a lot of variety. It explores a forest of mountain hemlock trees punctuated by meadows that provide distant views to the south and east. It can be skied in either direction, but traveling counterclockwise provides more interesting downhill slopes and turns. In this direction, the trail begins by climbing 45 feet (14 meters) to its high point. It then drops 200 feet (61 meters) in elevation before gaining 155 feet (47 meters) on its return to Rim Village. The trail is marked with blue diamonds in the trees and, from December through March, orange snow poles in the meadows. **Trailhead:** Snow ramp across from the entrance to the Rim Village Café & Gift Shop. The trail can also be accessed from a snow ramp near Crater Lake Lodge and a roadside pullout approximately 1.5 mi. (2.4 km) south of Rim Village.

East Rim Drive

The East Rim Drive is a good alternative to the West Rim Drive on windy days. The forested route provides protection from the elements and, upon reaching Sun Notch, a spectacular view of Crater Lake and the Phantom Ship. The route is not marked, but skiers should have no trouble following the path of the underlying road, which is unplowed from November to mid-June. The route is rated “intermediate” because it features longer and steeper climbs than the West Rim Drive and crosses several areas prone to avalanche. Trips of varying lengths are possible. Most skiers attempt to reach one of the following destinations before returning. **Trailhead:** Roadside pullout 150 yards (137 meters) south of Park Headquarters.

Summit of First Climb
Distance from trailhead: 1.8 mi. (2.9 km)
The road dips gently for the first half mile (.8 km), losing 115 feet (35 meters) of elevation while passing the park's residential area. Then begins a steady climb, which in 1.3 miles (2.1 km) gains 436 feet (133 meters). The climb is popular with skiers looking for a short, invigorating workout. Views from the summit are limited, but on the return trip Crater Lake Lodge is visible on the skyline straight ahead.

Vidae Falls
Distance from trailhead: 3.1 mi. (5.0 km)
Vidae Falls is a spring-fed cascade that drops 100 feet (30 meters) over a series of ledges on the west side of the road. In the winter, it is sometimes a beautiful lattice of ice. Other times, it is completely covered by snow. From the summit of the first climb, the road descends gradually to Vidae Falls, losing 191 feet (58 meters) of elevation. On the way, it traverses a potential avalanche area, which, if conditions warrant, can be avoided by taking the marked Vidae Ridge Avalanche Bypass Trail. (A detailed map of the bypass trail is available at the Steel Visitor Center.)

Sun Notch
Distance from trailhead: 4.5 mi. (7.2 km)
To view Crater Lake, skiers must continue on to Sun Notch, gaining an additional 505 feet (154 meters) of elevation. Skiers

Circling the Lake

Last winter, approximately 70 skiers and 30 snowshoers traveled all the way around Crater Lake. It's a trip that can be exceptionally rewarding, rich with spectacular views. It can also be physically and mentally demanding—a test of endurance and outdoor skills.

When the weather is clear, the 31-mile (50-km) loop takes an average of 3 days to complete. Storms, however, force many parties to turn back or to spend an extra night. The route is unmarked, difficult to follow in places, and crossed by a number of avalanche paths. Those attempting the trip should be experienced in winter camping, backcountry travel, and avalanche safety. A backcountry permit is required.

Although the circuit can typically be accomplished anytime between late November and early May, it is most commonly done in late March or April. Spring provides more hours of daylight than the winter months and longer periods of clear weather.

must also cross—or bypass—a second avalanche zone. (A detailed map of the Applegate Avalanche Bypass Route is available at the Steel Visitor Center.) Sun Notch itself lies .25 miles (.4 km) north of the East Rim Drive. To find it, leave the road at the apex of the sweeping right-hand curve; the turnout is not marked. The view from Sun Notch is dramatic. Nearly 1,000 feet (305 meters) above the water, it directly overlooks a rocky island known as the Phantom Ship. Stay back from the edge of the caldera and its dangerous, overhanging snow cornices.

Garfield-Applegate Ridge
Distance from trailhead: 3.2 mi. (5.1 km)
Another lake-viewing option for snowshoers and advanced skiers is to attain the caldera's rim between Garfield Peak and Applegate Peak. This is an unmarked but straightforward ascent through open meadows and groves of trees. Leave the East Rim Drive near the summit of the first climb. The rim is 1.4 miles (2.3 km) due north, with an additional elevation gain of 950 feet (290 meters).

ADVANCED TRAILS

Raven Trail

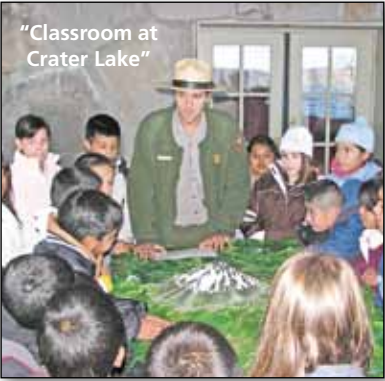
Distance: 1 mi. (1.6 km)
The Raven Trail is a favorite of telemark skiers. It descends steeply from Rim Village to Park Headquarters, dropping 610 feet (186 meters) in elevation. It is almost always skied downhill, which requires two vehicles or a shuttle to the top. The trail can be difficult to follow; it is marked with blue diamonds but descends rapidly through dense forest and involves several sharp turns. Upon leaving the forest, the trail crosses a potentially dangerous avalanche chute, then runs alongside the road to Park Headquarters. During times of heavy snow, when the road to Rim Village is closed, the Raven Trail also is used by snowshoers who hike up the trail to view the lake. **Upper Trailhead:** Snow ramp near Crater Lake Lodge. **Lower Trailhead:** Roadside pullout 150 yards (137 meters) south of Park Headquarters.



Dutton Creek Trail

Distance: 4.6 mi. (7.4 km)
This trail is little used but offers a fun and challenging backcountry experience. It is typically skied from north to south and therefore requires two vehicles or a shuttle. The top section, in places, is steep. It descends through a forest of mountain hemlock and red fir, dropping 1,000 feet (305 meters) in 2.5 miles (4 km) to meet the Pacific Crest Trail. The trail then climbs 250 feet (76 meters) to a junction. The left fork descends to Mazama Village; the right fork continues along the PCT to a trailhead on Highway 62. The trail is marked with blue diamonds and some older orange and red blazes, but skiers should carry a topographic map and a compass or GPS. **Trailhead:** Snow ramp across from the Rim Village restrooms. Ski west, just past Rim Village, and look for the trailhead sign on the south side of West Rim Drive.

Support Your Park—



Shop in the Visitor Center Bookstore

When you shop in the Steel Visitor Center, all proceeds from your purchase are invested back into the park. The bookstore is operated by the Crater Lake Natural History Association, a non-profit organization established in 1942 to support the park's educational and scientific programs.

Buy Crater Lake License Plates

If you live in Oregon, consider choosing Crater Lake license plates for your vehicle. For a one-time charge of \$20, you can outfit your car with these beautiful plates while supporting park projects. You can purchase Crater Lake plates at any time, not just when buying a new vehicle or renewing your registration. Visit any Oregon DMV office or www.oregon.gov/odot/dmv for details.

Money from plate sales goes into an endowment that funds the operation of the park's Science and Learning Center. The center opened in 2006 and consists of two renovated

The association funds a variety of park projects, including the printing of this visitor guide. Some of the bookstore's offerings are described to the right. For a complete list of merchandise and to buy items online, visit www.craterlakeoregon.org. Items can also be purchased by phone by calling 541-594-3111.

historic structures near Park Headquarters: the original Superintendent's Residence and Chief Naturalist's Residence. These buildings now provide living and working space for visiting scientists, teachers, and artists.

The Science and Learning Center draws researchers and educators to Crater Lake from around the world, encouraging them to use the park as an outdoor laboratory and classroom. For more information about the Science and Learning Center and its programs, visit www.nps.gov/crla/slc.htm.

Volunteer Your Time

Looking for a hands-on way to help the park? Consider sharing your time and talents as a Crater Lake VIP (Volunteer-In-Parks). Full-time volunteers are needed throughout the year to help staff visitor centers, present interpretive programs, and assist with research and monitoring projects. Opportunities are advertised at www.volunteer.gov/gov. Volunteers are provided free housing in exchange for 3 months or more of service.

To assist with special projects or volunteer periodically, join The Friends of Crater Lake, a non-profit organization founded in 1993. Members remove non-native plants, build

and maintain trails, contact visitors, operate a winter information desk at Rim Village, and assist with special events. Learn more at www.friendsofcraterlake.org.

The Crater Lake Ski Patrol has been assisting winter visitors and maintaining the park's cross-country ski trails since 1983. Members, identifiable by their bright red parkas, receive training in wilderness first aid, survival skills, search and rescue, map and compass use, and avalanche safety in exchange for at least 6 days of service each winter. For more information, visit www.craterlakeskipatrol.org.

Get Involved with the Crater Lake Trust

The Crater Lake National Park Trust is a non-profit organization that raises private funds to support park projects and connect the park with surrounding communities.

The Trust helps fund, for example, the transportation of more than 5,000 grade-school students to the park each year. In a program called "Classroom at Crater Lake," kids engage in hands-on science and learn about wildlife, old-growth forests, and winter ecology. For over half the kids, it's their first visit to the park. The Trust also organizes events for the public at Crater Lake, including free "Family Fun Days" twice annually. And

the Trust's lecture series brings "the park to the people" with free public talks in local communities on the park's history, geology, and ecology.

The Trust produces a free, monthly, e-mail newsletter that can help you keep in touch with the park and learn about upcoming events and volunteer opportunities. To sign up, visit www.craterlaketrust.org or send an e-mail to info@craterlaketrust.org. You can also find the Trust on Facebook and Twitter, or write to P.O. Box 62, Crater Lake, OR 97604. Share your love of the park by making a tax-deductible gift.

Share Your Comments

Whether you have a compliment, concern, or suggestion, we'd like to hear from you! This is your national park, and we value your input on how best to manage it. You can provide feedback in several ways. Ask for a comment

form at the visitor center, send an e-mail to crla_information_requests@nps.gov, or write to: Superintendent, Crater Lake National Park, P.O. Box 7, Crater Lake, OR 97604.

—Thank You!

Keeping the Park Open

(continued from page 1)



"It can be a hazardous job," reports Steve, "especially when it's dark and white-out conditions are occurring. On a winding mountain road, you never know what's around the next corner. It could be a tree across the road at windshield level, or a car stuck in the snow."

Despite the hazards—which also include rare, but potentially deadly, avalanches—Steve says the rewards are even greater. "It's very fulfilling to be able to provide a service to people that allows them to experience the incredible beauty of Crater Lake. And being able to ski and hike from the front door of my house is a nice fringe benefit."

The most challenging part of the job is "Spring Opening," when the equipment operators turn their attention to opening up the 30-mile (48-km) Rim Drive and 9-mile (14-km) North Entrance Road for the summer. They begin on the West Rim, departing Rim Village around the 3rd week in April. On average, the snow they encounter is 20 to 30 feet (6 to 9 meters) deep. In the vicinity of Watchman Peak, they meet drifts 45 to 50 feet (15 meters) thick.

The crews head slowly north, averaging .25 miles (.4 km) of road cleared per day. In a good year, they'll reach the park's North Entrance in late May. After a severe winter, it will take until mid-June. The East Rim Drive is their final leg. "If we can get all the way around the lake by the 4th of July," Steve Thomas says, "we're happy."

For your safety, when you encounter a snow plow in the park, please give it a wide berth. Passing a plow on the park's narrow roads can be dangerous. Wait until an intersection or until the plow comes to a stop and the operator waves you by. Until then, assume that the operator can't see you; visibility from inside the plows can be poor. Also, skiers and pedestrians should be sure to keep well away from the cascade of snow thrown by the rotary plows.

Thanks to the hard work, long hours, and dedication of the park's heavy equipment operators and mechanics, we can access and enjoy Crater Lake National Park every season of the year.

Recommended Reading



Crater Lake: The Story Behind the Scenery
Large photos with detailed captions accompany the text of this popular book. 48 pages, \$11.95.



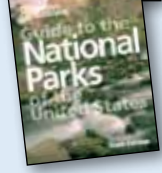
Crater Lake: Gem of the Cascades
A comprehensive guide to the park's geologic story, written by a former park ranger. 168 pages, \$15.95.



Crater Lake National Park: A History
A thoughtful and thorough account of the park's rich human history. 280 pages, \$22.95.



Exploring Crater Lake National Park: A Family Activity Book
Fun, educational puzzles and activities for kids. 103 pages, \$9.99.



Guide to the National Parks of the United States
This best-selling book from National Geographic features 375 stunning photos and 80 color maps. 480 pages, \$26.00.



Trees to Know in Oregon
Tree identification is easy and enjoyable with this photo-packed, fact-filled guide. 153 pages, \$18.00.



Winter: An Ecological Handbook
A fascinating look at how organisms survive and adapt to cold and snow. 275 pages, \$16.95.



The ABCs of Avalanche Safety
A pocket-sized guide to traveling safely in avalanche country. 144 pages, \$7.95.

Other Useful Items



The Mountain That Became a Lake CD
Listen to this CD as you drive the park's roads. Park rangers and American Indians share facts, stories, and insight about Crater Lake. 60 minutes, \$16.95.



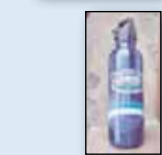
Crater Lake Topographic Map
1:55,000 scale. Waterproof and tearproof. \$11.95.



Plants & Animals of Crater Lake Nat'l Park
This folding, waterproof pocket guide will help you identify the park's most visible species. 11 pages, \$6.95.



Wizard Island Poster
Winter photo of Wizard Island draped in snow. 18 x 24 inches (46 x 61 cm), \$8.99.



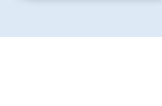
Crater Lake: Mirror of Heaven DVD
Expanded version of the film shown at the Steel Visitor Center. Traces the lake's human history from American Indian narratives to the protection of the lake as a national park. 27 minutes, \$19.99.



Crater Lake Water Bottle
Stainless steel water bottle with Crater Lake logo. 25 ounces (.75 liters), \$17.99.



Crater Lake Cinch Sack
Carry your water, snacks, and sunscreen. Available in blue, green, or red. \$16.99.



Clark's Nutcracker T-Shirt
100% cotton t-shirt with Clark's nutcracker on front and Crater Lake on back. \$16.99.